

## Review

# The proliferation of private universities in Tanzania: Quality compromised?

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University education has a significant contribution to development endeavors. Universities have to provide countries with highly qualified skilled labour and technological developments through researches. Most invariably skilled labour impacts to different national projects positively. It must be noted that the university education required to accommodate development projects successfully must be of high quality. The concept of quality can variably be assessed. The prominent four approaches have been used to assess the quality of education in particular. Such approaches are structural approach, processes approach, product-output approach, and legal and institutional approach. Tanzania introduced university education in 1970 with only one university, i.e. the University of Dar es Salaam. Before this time, Dar es Salaam University was the university college of East Africa as it were for Makerere University College of East Africa (Uganda) and Nairobi University College of East Africa (Kenya). After the adoption of liberal policies of private ownership, Tanzania is experiencing a proliferation of private universities alongside public universities. With emphasis on legal-institutional and structural approaches, this article argues that the quality of private universities in Tanzania is undermined greatly. The article recommends a proper review of education policies reflected in the role of universities by the government and private university owners.

**Key words:** University education, private university, proliferation of universities, quality assessment, Tanzania.

## INTRODUCTION

The prime role of university education is multifaceted. While it aims at creating a quality population with variegated skills, the end result is economic development. This is to say, university education and economic development are inextricably linked. What is suggested, here, is; one of the prerequisites to economic development is quality (university education, population). The hypothesis purports quality university education leads to economic development. In the same flow of thought, a number of authors argue investing in all the people is a key to economic development. They propose investing in people through quality university education.

For example, Schultz (1981) "rejects the widespread but erroneous view that limitations of space, energy, cropland, and other physical properties of the earth are the decisive to human betterment". He goes further to say, "the acquired abilities of people – their education, experience, skills, and health – are basic in achieving economic progress". Similarly, ILO (1967) chops in delineating that skill formation is very important in industrial development. It puts that "success in industrial

development depends in part on the availability of skills, and it is the task of planning in this field to ensure the skills are available at the appropriate moment". ILO suggests that skill formation must be targeted by governments in place. This must be done through policy formulations so as to implement policies leading to attainment of particular skills required for economic development.

The latter involves the choice of technology. It is noteworthy that science and technology is more prominent in knowledge-based economy. Complimentarily, OECD (1999) stresses the fact that investing in human capital is a key to innovation and growth. The synergy of the two perspectives leads to a conclusion by Summers (1994)<sup>1</sup> where he stated that investment in human capital is a key element in achieving

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<sup>1</sup> This is EDI paper. EDI stands for Economic Development Institute of the World Bank. It was delivered as a presentation paper in EDI Seminar at the Annual Meeting of the World Bank.

long-term sustainable economic growth. Macroeconomic studies have shown that education is positively correlated with overall economic growth. Both skilled human resource and scientific innovations have a significant contribution in economic growth. Practically, quality education is one of factors contributing to economic growth in most of western countries.

University education simply refers education offered by an institution of higher education and research. Such institution offers both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in various fields. Higher education is the top of the education pyramid and determines to a large extent the state of education system of the country, especially its quality (Sanyal, 2005). Specifically, URT (1999) defines higher education as the scope of knowledge and skills imparted within the tertiary<sup>2</sup> level of education. One may argue that university education excels at achieving quality of knowledge and skills.

However, the ultimate objective is economic development. Examples can be drawn from developed countries of Europe and America. Germany, in particular, is one of the most populated countries in Europe but the largest economy in the European Union and the third largest in the world. One of the main reasons to the German strongest economy in Europe is a high contribution of quality university education. Consequently, university education produces highly qualified human resource, scientific innovations, and quality researches. For example, Max Planck Society Scientist has been winning Nobel Prizes since 1948 for quality scientific researches. Related to this are the international leading research institutions; Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft for applied sciences and Helmholtz Association plus other 15 (Facts about Germany, 2007; Schmoch, 2011). Their development is purely a role played by universities.

Schmoch concludes that the main contribution of universities to the German economy is the provision of a competent labour force. That competent labour force is definitely prepared by universities. It is imperative to state that university education is very important in Africa, generally, and Tanzania in particular. In addition, Sifuna and Sawamura (2010) reiterate that university education is of paramount importance for Africa's future. They point out both highly trained people and top-quality research as of great demand in Africa. The outcome of research is a basic foundation to a formulation of policies, planning and implementation of developmental projects. The introduction of university education in Tanzania does not

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<sup>2</sup> Tertiary level of education includes two level of training institutions, namely, academic full-professional and intermediary professional trainings but excluding both primary and secondary education. In simple terms, tertiary level of education refers to universities and non-university professional training institutions. URT (1999) adds that universities are the highest-level of institutions dedicated to the professional and intellectual development of mankind and society in general.

pervade from the above facts. The origins can be traced back to the period before independence. The University of Dar es Salaam, existed as a university college of London University in 1957 and later university college of East Africa after independence<sup>5</sup>. During colonial rule it served the purpose of a university though to a lesser extent.

This is due to the fact that the core objectives of colonialism prevented the actual role of a university. It was not intended basically for economic development of a country. Therefore, only a few people benefited from the university education. Officially, the University of Dar es Salaam as an institution of imparting knowledge and skills for national development was established in 1970. It became the sole university institution in Tanzania with various faculties at main Campus, including the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law (Dar es Salaam); and Faculty of Agriculture<sup>6</sup> in Morogoro. The Faculty of Agriculture was transformed into a full-fledged university under the Parliamentary Act No. 6 of 1984. It became the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). The rationale behind the establishment of Sokoine University of Agriculture, to its earliest, was/is to foster economic development of the country.

Since then, Tanzania, through Arusha Declaration of 1967, placed agriculture at fore in economic development. Agriculture was/is the backbone of Tanzania's economy. It presupposes a strong link that exists between agriculture and industry. That means, it is agriculture that feeds the industries and vice versa. Reddy (2011) argues that university research transformed Brazilian agriculture through research on varieties of seeds, diseases resistant crops, and the like that impacted positively to economic development due to increased productivity and farmer incomes. Moreover, these developments were disseminated through industrial agriculture that necessitates excellent performance of agribusiness export. Alongside the University of Dar es Salaam, there existed Institute of Development Management (IDM) in 1971. The institute aimed at training government officials, rural development officers, and local government court magistrates (Mzumbe Prospectus 2011).

However, in December 2006 IDM was transformed into a university under the authority of the Mzumbe University Charter of 2007. This was after Act No.9 of 2001 establishing Mzumbe University (MU) was repealed by the Universities Act No.7 of 2005. Yet, the Universities Act of 2005 provides for private universities in Tanzania through granting of charter. It is important to note that,

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<sup>5</sup> Source: [www.udsm.ac.tz/about\\_us/index.php](http://www.udsm.ac.tz/about_us/index.php) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>6</sup> Faculty of Agriculture was transformed from a college of University of Dar es Salaam College of East Africa that was established in 1965. The college of Agriculture offered diploma trainings on agriculture during colonial rule.

the role of higher education institutions in Tanganyika and then Tanzania was/is development. However, Tanzania is still one of the poorest countries in the world. One may argue, thus, there is malicious disequilibrium between university establishment and quality of education for development.

After 1980s Tanzania implemented structural adjustment programs (SAPs). These programs transformed Tanzania's economy to pseudo-commercial economy. It is pseudo-commercial economy in that agriculture which marks the backbone of Tanzania's economy has not been commercialized. It is still small in production due to poor technology and not sufficient for exportation. Mwamila and Diyamett (2011) point out that agricultural sector has been growing by only 3% over the last decade. Apparently, the government seized up her sole role of ownership, provider and producer of goods and services. That means both private individuals and government have a role in production and provision of goods and services. It is therefore, a start point of private universities.

By their virtue, private universities are profit oriented as contrasted to public universities which are service oriented. This is reflected, partly, in tuition fees levied by both private and public universities. For example, International Medical and Technological University (IMTU) (private university) levied USD4500 equivalent to 7.2 mil Tshs. and currently 6.5mil Tshs. (equivalent to USD4062), for undergraduate degree, while UDSM (public university) levies to a maximum of 1.5mil Tshs. equivalent to 588USD as tuition fees, for the same degree. Notwithstanding, it is, generally, from liberal framework that the ultimate objective of private production is profit realization.

Profit oriented, imbedded feature of private universities, have impact to quality of the service. It impacts to development in a two-way traffic. It is alluding to state that quality of education at private universities would impact to development projects positively and vice versa is true. To its specificity, the conditions through which private universities operate are a necessary paving stone for quality education and thus attainment of development. These conditions are legal and institutional framework, university's infrastructures, adequate learning materials, appropriate teaching courses, student-lecturer ratio, and teaching time frame, to mention a few.

From the introduction of private universities in 1990s to date, Tanzania has about 19 universities and 15 university colleges both public and private (TCU, 2009). These are UDSM, SUA, MU, Ardhi University (ARU), Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Muhimbili University of Health and Applied Sciences (MUHAS), University of Dodoma (UDOM), State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), Moshi University College of Cooperatives and Business Studies (MUCCoBS), Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE), Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (MAIST) as public universities

and IMTU, Hurbert Kairuki Memorial University (HKMU), Tumaini University (TU), Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), Saint John's University of Tanzania (SJUT), Zanzibar University (ZU), Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), Mount Meru University (MMU), Teofilo Kisanji University (TEKU), University of Arusha (UoA), Iringa University College (IUCO), Sebastian Kolowa University College (SEKUCO), Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College (KCMC), Makumila University College (MUCO), Weil Bugando University College of Health Sciences (WBUCHS), Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College (TUDARCO), Ruaha University College (RUCO), Mwenge University College of Education (MWECE), University College of Education Zanzibar (UCEZ), Aga Khan University College – Tanzania Institute of Higher Education (AKU-THE), Stefano Moshi Memorial University College (SMMCO) as private universities.

In addition, about seven (7) private universities, and university colleges were established in 2010 and 2011 (with exception of SAUT-Dar es Salaam Centre established in 2007) making up a total of forty-one (41) universities and colleges. They include: SAUT – Bukoba Centre<sup>7</sup>, Archbishop Mihayo University College of Tabora (AMUCTA)<sup>8</sup>, SAUT – Songea Centre<sup>9</sup>, Stella Maris Mtwara University College (STEMMUCO)<sup>10</sup>, Jordan University College (JUCO)<sup>11</sup>, SAUT – Dar es Salaam Centre<sup>12</sup>, Eckernforde Tanga University (ETU)<sup>13</sup> and SJUT – Dar es Salaam Campus (St. Mark's Teaching Centre). Out of 41 universities and university colleges, twenty-eight (28) are private universities university colleges and centres. This number is two times that of public universities.

One may argue, thus, the impact, of private universities together with university colleges, on quality education for development is magnificent due to a large number of institutions. It is for this rationale this article stems at evaluating quality of education offered by private universities. It argues that with constrained resources such as learning infrastructure, lecturers, learning

<sup>7</sup>Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.bukobadiocese.catholicweb.com/index.cfm/NewsItem?=&id=325010&From=home](http://www.bukobadiocese.catholicweb.com/index.cfm/NewsItem?=&id=325010&From=home) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>8</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.amucta.ac.tz](http://www.amucta.ac.tz) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>9</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.saut.ac.tz/aboutus.php](http://www.saut.ac.tz/aboutus.php) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>10</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.saut.ac.tz/mtwara](http://www.saut.ac.tz/mtwara) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>11</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.morogoro.sds.org](http://www.morogoro.sds.org) last visited 13/02/2012

<sup>12</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012; [www.saut.ac.tz/aboutus.php](http://www.saut.ac.tz/aboutus.php) last visited 13/02/2012. SAUT-Dar es Salaam Centre was established in 2007, but was not listed by TCU in 2009

<sup>13</sup> Source: [www.eckernfordetangauniversity.ac.tz/admission.html](http://www.eckernfordetangauniversity.ac.tz/admission.html)

materials, student hostels, and inefficient legal and institutional framework, the quality of university education from private universities is undermined at escalating heights. It is therefore proper to argue that stunted economy, poor quality population, and blunt agriculture are among other things, a function of poor quality of university education in Tanzania.

In the accomplishment of the prime objective this article is subdivided into sections. First, on introduction, the article describes the role of university education by pinpointing out the correlation between quality education and development. Second, the article discusses theoretical framework as a guiding rule to quality assessment. Third, the article provides a critical assessment of quality at private universities in Tanzania. Fourth, the article explains existing challenges to quality improvement in Tanzania. Lastly, the article concludes that quality is not promptly observed by private universities, besides, the legal and institutional framework is weak, and it is the high time for the government to review the legal and institutional framework for a better implementation of laws governing education in Tanzania.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Quality assessment has been variably conceived. While some thinkers perceive it as a means to accountability others take it as means to an end. Two models are nurtured in this respect. De Vries (1997) etched the models as the rational management and the technical rationality. They present that rational management model concerns with logical analysis of higher education context and the rationalization and technologization of the process. They avowed, here, the list of such an analysis; as defining aims and objectives to be obtained, establishing criteria and systems for the monitoring and evaluation of education outcomes, and, lastly, require a written documentation: transparent, procedures, written reports, criteria for performance and regulations for accountability.

On the other hand, technical rationality model adopts the ideology of instrumentalism, technical rationality or scientism. The purpose is to find out the best means to predetermine ends. The emphasis is thus put to logical reality, based on assumptions that when higher education processes are used, we will attain high quality products. It may be argued that regardless of the terms used, the two models aim to achieve high performance in the end. Without deluding its content, Lim (2001) introduces instrumental approach. The approach begins by stating the purpose of higher education institution and ensuring that this is consistent with the nation's goals. Under this context the nation's main objective is development. Therefore, quality of higher education can be assessed basing on the nation's objectives. Nevertheless, quality is differently defined to refer to the level of excellence in

performance (Mosha, 2000). The question is how can excellence in performance be realized? It is through a measure of such performance by a set of standards or criteria of excellence. Under this context, excellence in performance connotes achievement of prime objectives. In order to assess quality of education in relation to attainment of the set nation's objectives there should be standards to observe. Mosha (2000) explains that 'standards of excellence or merit are set by authority, custom or general consent'. It may be argued that since there is involvement of a nation's development, the government is the in charge in setting quality standards through the formulation of policies and enactment of laws. However, universities have to operate alongside these standards for the achievement of national development.

A consequent failure to observe the standards impacts negatively to development endeavors. These standards are, generally, based on inputs-outputs and processes in learning. There are approaches to a settling of these standards. These include: structural, processes, product-output, and legal and institutional approaches.

## Structural approach to quality standards

The standards under this approach are set based on availability and sufficiency of learning resources and support services, availability and quality of university lecturers, and selection of university lecturers' procedures. In support of this, Mwiria et al. (2007) argues that university's physical facilities determine student enrolment and the number of academic programmes it can offer. They conclude that physical facilities ultimately affect the quality of an individual student's experience. In other words, such facilities have impact to product-output. Learning resources and support services include: physical buildings for libraries, classes, offices, hostels and cafeterias; human resources i.e. lecturer-student ratio; availability of books, journals, newspapers, magazines, computers, internet services, and playgrounds for sports.

Moreover, the physical location of a university is also of great consideration. The university premises should not be installed at city centres where there is lots of chaos that, necessarily, prevent quality in learning. In support of this, Ashworth and Harvey (1994) explain that the programmes of study need to have the benefit of an adequate amount of teaching accommodation, both general and specialist, which is suitable in type and location. The authors further put that, to achieve the objectives it is often necessary to utilize the learning resources and it should be expected that laboratories, workshops, studios, library, and other learning materials can be assessed to support teaching and facilitate learning. It may be submitted that university infrastructures have greater contribution to quality of

education offered. Lim provides findings which are supported by causal observations that poorly trained teachers and a shortage of textbooks lead to poor educational results and lower social and private returns to education investment. Quality education presumes adequate resources that facilitate learning process. In other words, insufficient learning resources and services explain the detrimental university education that cannot achieve the intended objectives.

### Processes approach to quality standards

The approach focuses on learning as a process. Emphasis is put on how good are the processes. The latter include finances, students' learning experience and progress, and curriculum content and organization. On finances, the assumption is that a university should have adequate fiscal resources to run all university processes. This is because the structures of a university require enough funding.

It is argued by Mwapachu in Mosha (2000) that "ineffective funding and budgetary cutbacks is visible in terms of the unabated academic flight, moonlighting, erosion in standard of teaching, accommodation and service facilities, deferment of development and maintenance of physical infrastructure, failure to increase student enrolment, declining library standards due to acute shortage of new text and reference books and journals". It may be argued that insufficient funding neuter standards of achievement in university education. Notwithstanding, private universities depend heavily on tuition fees as a major source of financing the institutions (Varghese, 2004). Therefore, the lesser a university collects from tuition fees the higher the quality of education is undermined.

The students' learning experience and progress is measured through enrolment qualifications and examinations during study. Examinations are assessed by a designed grading system. In Tanzania, the university grading system ranges from A denoting excellent performance to F denoting poor performance and failure. The system is problematic with regard to quality. This is because a lecturer becomes a final grade provider. Substantively, when a lecturer is not by any chance in good terms with a student, the examination grade becomes a 'secret weapon' to punish the student. Female students have been victims of abuse by male lecturers who use university grades to demand sex. Louise (2011) confirms that, "some male academics consider it a right to demand sex with female students in return for grades."<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, there is a practice of

<sup>14</sup> Louise (2011) "Sex, Grades and Power in Higher Education in Tanzania and Ghana", *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol. 41, No.1 March, pp. 101-115 conducted 200 interviews with academics and policy makers, and 200 life-history

subjecting the grading pattern to an external examination in order to maintain quality standards. However, Williams (1997) demonstrates that external examiner system can no longer sustain its 'traditional purposes'<sup>16</sup> in a mass and diversified higher education. Moreover, examinations are not good indicators of performance as far as cheating during examination is involved. It has been observed that many of the students who usually get first class during their advanced secondary education do not perform at best in most universities.

Munishi (2000) argues that examination results are one minute exposition of the state of or quality output of training and education system. He explains that output indicators of quality levels are seen to depend much on quality of input-level indicators such as space and buildings, teachers, equipment, teacher-student ratios, and equipments/text-book student ratios. One may argue thus, structural approach to quality assessment is in no way neglectable. It makes a foundation to the assessment of learning processes and outcomes.

The curriculum content and organization are assessed by relevance of the programmes offered, and the quality of teaching staff, i.e. are courses taught by qualified lecturers? Mosha (2000) posts a challenge facing universities in Tanzania. He says "universities are unable to recruit and retain qualified applicants (of international calibre) for jobs in the departments and retain them". One of the major reasons is inadequate finances. Second, it is very difficult to recruit a qualified professor, for instance, bearing the fact that lecturers, in Tanzania, are not adequately motivated and remunerated. The consequence of this has been a reliance on part time lecturers. Arguably, a part time lecturer is never looking for improving quality of education rather extra money for a living.

This argument finds support of Mosha (2000) who utters that "many teachers from primary to university level are physically and psychologically absent. Their minds

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interviews with students. She reported that interviews showed that sexual harassment has become 'normalised' within some universities. This however, does not exclude private universities

<sup>16</sup> External examiner in British system, traditionally, is aimed at quality of university products. It means that, the system suits a small but qualified number of students where student-lecturer relationship is manageable. In Tanzania is a system of measuring quality of university grades as well as accountability on part of lecturers. The system allows some means of fairness whereby grades of students are subjected to double marking. The external examiner checks on mistakes or unfairness performed by the internal examiner. The challenge that still exists is that, not all exam papers are cross-checked by external examiner it is rather a small sample which might even not be representative. Usually external examiners spend a few days checking a huge bundle of exams partly due to financial insufficiency

are kept on wondering all the time as they contemplate on the 'Miradis' (projects) that earn them extra money to meet basic needs. The result is poor preparation of lessons/lectures, and infrequent staffs contact outside the lecture rooms". It must be noted that poor lessons/lectures cannot build a knowledge base for students. Moreover, the knowledge transmitted from one generation to another is distorted hence poor in quality. The relevance of programmes offered is measured by age in relation to development of science and technology. Yusuf (2007) puts that, "universities were at a forefront in training generation after generation of highly skilled, technologically sophisticated graduates, who could be employed successfully by domestic firms seeking to enter global industries, by multinational corporations, and not least by the institutions steering the economy's industrial development." It can be argued that programmes offered by universities must be able to foster development through innovation and competent labour of international caliber. In support of this view, Yusuf demonstrates that, "universities played a very special role in East Asian development – not as drivers of innovation, as commonly viewed in the West, but as shapers of human capital formation".

One of the challenges facing developing countries including Tanzania is the relevance of programmes offered by universities in relation to developmental objectives, both domestic and global. Supportively, Moshia (2000) asserts that many educational institutions in Tanzania are still offering traditional programmes that were designed two or three decades ago. Some of these programmes might not be adequately responsive to contemporary market demands. The situation is worse especially in private universities. Reddy argues that, "in most cases, private universities are focused on few disciplines". Arguably, these disciplines are humanities, law and accounting. They hardly, focus on science and technology fields.

Additionally, de Mello *et al* (2011) while giving an example of Brazilian universities point out that, "one of the consequences of private institutions has been a commercialization without quality in higher education, and an increase in supply that does not meet the needs of those who cannot pay and the economic or social requirement of preparing human resources". These scholars explain further that, "courses in management, administration and education, law and accounting sciences are the most common, with few exceptions, private institutions offer education of limited equality and do not carry out research". The scenario is not different from Tanzania where most of private universities do not carry out research activities. For example, TEKU, MMU, UoA, SJUT, MUM, IUCO, SEKUCO, UCEZ, MWUCE, SMMCO, and TUDARCO have no records showing that they have ever carried out research activities except those theoretical papers by students. Yet Kavishe (1999) holds that research and development (R&D) activities

in Tanzania are carried out mainly by public institutions and universities which are under direct responsibility of respective sectoral government ministries as specified in the respective Acts of Parliament. It is also interesting to note that most of these universities offer programmes limited to management, education, law and accounting. However, in 2009, about seven (7) out of 21 private universities and university colleges offered science related programmes on human medicine and science technology.

### **Product-Output approach to quality standards**

The approach assumes that at this stage learning objectives are achieved only when all requirements have been fulfilled. It measures learning objectives through knowledge, skills and understanding of students. Through this a student should be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired from the university. A failure by a student to demonstrate properly what he/she has achieved from the university explains inadequacy of quality in his/her education learning and experience. There are several strategies used to measure the quality of university products. First, it is through employers' feedbacks. When the quality of the products is low, employers are reluctant to employ graduate from certain university of poor quality. Alternatively, employers will employ from outside where they are assured of quality.

Second, it is through country's development. As stated one of the objectives of university education is economic development of the country. The misery of the population is largely caused by lack of knowledge and skills to transform a living through hardworking. Moreover, natural resources of the nation are under exploited as a result of inadequate technology and skills. Conclusively, one would say, if development is not achieved then the quality of university products is underrated. In contrast, most of the developed countries have their natural resources fully utilized. The most reason spelt out is quality of university education through resulting into massive researches and highly skilled labour. This however, has led to economic development in Western Countries of Europe and USA in particular.

In recent years there has been, in Tanzania, an increasing mismatch of quality of graduates and work performed by them reflected by university graduates' certificates and their performance at work place. Employers have been complaining that most graduates cannot deliver quality work at their work premises. On top of that, majority of university graduates cannot work independently as they need supervision in most cases. Kazeri (2011) presents a verdict taken during a panel discussion on 'the quality of graduates and labour market' at 'THIS WEEK IN PERSPECTIVE' TV programme broadcasted by a national television in Tanzania, TBC1, that "the quality of our graduates is below the

expectations of labour market”, and that, “this is contributed to the nature of current education system which is marred by a number of obstacles”. Education policy and inadequate resources that are constantly used by universities to prepare graduates are the most referred obstacles to quality graduates. Therefore, it is not surprising that employers alternatively employ graduates from Kenya and Uganda mostly. The underlying reason to employers’ decisions and actions of not employing Tanzanian graduates is that most graduates lack skills of doing work. Radford (1997) supports as he says the major reason is simply that graduates have been trained to do something else. This can be explained by teachings which are more theoretical than practices. And perhaps, such teachings provide inadequate knowledge to fit the current environment. The best concluding explanation to such argument is inadequate resources and a reduced time span of study programmes.

Additionally, Afeti (2009) clearly states that almost in all countries of Africa, there exist large numbers of graduates who are unemployed besides the existence of opportunities for skilled workers in the economy. This is explained by no more than a mismatch between training and labour market demands. It may be concluded that inadequate resources for learning produce ‘half-cooked’ graduates. With a valid evidence, the administrative secretary at the faculty of laws, SAUT, and a candidate for master of laws’ at the same institution had completed her Bachelor of Laws from TU (SAUT Prospectus, 2011 to 2012) is very ‘qualified’. One would expect her to practice what she acquired out of her studies, despite the fact that she was not trained to become a secretary. Two important conclusions can be drawn. First, she is one of those ‘half-cooked’ graduates who cannot deliver. Notwithstanding that there is a very great demand of lawyers and/or law professionals in Tanzania. The knowledge she acquired no matter how comprehensive it seems has not been of use towards national development.

Second, It is a wastage of resources both human and fiscal. The government and/or her parents/guardian did invest lot of money to her education. Therefore, it is proper to argue that, the quality of university graduates is a function of adequate learning resources and supporting services, for which dubiously, most students do not have. Moreover, the quality of learning processes and outcomes depend heavily on inputs (learning resources and services).

### **Legal and institutional approach to quality standards**

The approach set a foundation for university education standards. It puts standards for university establishment, admission policies and quality assurance. In Tanzania, universities are established under Universities Act No.7 of 2005 (Universities Act, 2005). This piece of legislation

was preceded by various Acts of Parliament which established various universities such as UDSM (Act No. 1978); OUT (Act No. 1992); MU (Act No. 9 of 2001) and SUA (Act No. 6 of 1984). However, the Universities Act 2005 repealed all other laws establishing universities. In fact, the Universities Act 2005 is the current working law to the establishment and operation of universities as well as quality standards.

Section 4 of the Universities Act, 2005 establishes the Commission for Universities (TCU). The Commission is charged with the responsibility to establish universities and observe quality of university education. Section 5 of the Universities Act 2005 outlines the functions of the Commission as follows:

- (a) to advise the Minister on any aspect or matter of university education;
- (b) to audit, on regular basis, the quality assurance mechanisms of universities;
- (c) to provide guidance and monitor -
  - (i) criteria for students admission to universities in the United Republic;
  - (ii) proposals of outlines of academic programmes or syllabi and general curriculum submitted to the Commission by universities;
  - (iii) the long-term planning, staff development, scholarship and development strategies and programmes of the universities;
  - (iv) recurrent and development budgets for public universities;
- (d) to collect, examine, store in data-base or data-bank and publish information relating to higher education, research and consultancy;
- (e) to consider and make recommendation to the Minister regarding the upgrading or downgrading of the status of a university;
- (f) to establish transfer procedures for university students who wish to be transferred from one university to another and one programme to another;
- (g) to levy fees or any other form of charge for specific services, facilities and documents rendered or supplied to institutions;
- (h) to monitor and regulate general management and performance of universities;
- (i) to oversee the provision by universities of essential resources for the needs of their current academic programmes and related functions;
- (j) to promote –
  - (i) the objectives of higher education, in particular, the development, processing, storage and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of humanity and the harnessing of knowledge for the production of usable goods and services;
  - (ii) quality assurance in higher education;
  - (iii) noble ideals of national unity and identity in universities;
  - (iv) gender equality, balance and equity;

- (v) cooperation and net-working among universities within and outside the United Republic;
- (k) to consider applications from persons, companies, or organizations seeking to establish universities or programmes in the United Republic and make recommendation to the Minister;
- (l) to set standards, accredit, and register all universities;
- (m) to regulate and standardize –
  - (i) promotion criteria, designations, and titles of academic and senior administrative staff,
  - (ii) Schemes with standard criteria for broadening of opportunities for persons in disadvantaged groups to secure sponsorship for higher education and to acquire requisite academic criteria for admission to universities;
- (n) to standardize, recognize, and equate degrees, diplomas, and certificates conferred or awarded by foreign institutions and local institutions;
- (o) to establish and maintain a qualification framework for universities;
- (p) to take part in establishing and maintaining a national qualification framework for universities;
- (q) to solicit for and distribute funds among universities; and
- (r) to do all such other acts and things as are provided for to be done by the Commission under this Act or any other written law.

It may be submitted that TCU is the custodian institution established by law to regulate the provision of university education in Tanzania including matters of quality of education. To that end TCU formulates university accreditation process, students' admission criteria, and quality standards. In order to maintain quality standards, TCU must fully observe university accreditation, students' criteria and the quality of learning. Argumentatively, all the three aspects influence one another. This means that proper accreditation of universities influences selection of university students and finally impact to the quality of learning process.

The Universities Act Regulations, 2005 (The Regulations) made under section 62(1) delineates all procedures for the establishment of a university. After all the procedures have been fulfilled, the President after receiving recommendation from TCU may grant a charter<sup>18</sup>.

The Regulations enlists eligibility for a grant of charter under section 4 that an application may be made by existing public universities whose legal instruments were repealed<sup>19</sup> under the Act; existing public and private universities whose current legal instruments must be

replaced by charters; foreign universities operating in Tanzania; and a university who is a holder of a certificate of provisional registration for a period of not less than three years from the date of grant of such certificate. It may be put that, all private universities under this context, established before 2009, are eligible for application for grant of a charter.

Article 21 of the Universities Act states that, "No person shall provide university education unless that person has been granted a charter or approval of a charter in accordance of the provisions of this Act". What it means, is that without a charter a university is not qualified to provide a university education. More importantly, a university applies for accreditation and a charter after fulfilling all the required procedures for accreditation.

Article 24 (1) and (2) of the Universities Act provides for supplementary requirements for accreditation. These include: a list of academic qualifications of the academic staff and senior administrative staff in full-time employment; a list of the total number of students that have been enrolled in each programme; precise information on availability of library facilities, including size, quality and quantity of the equipment provided in each programme; a statement of the financial resources available for the exclusive use of the institution; and an inventory of the physical resources available for the exclusive use of the institution. It is submitted that the law puts a foundation to quality of university education establishment of a university with adequate resources for quality learning.

Thus, inappropriate establishment of universities forms a weak foundation for quality education. There are five (5) categories of registration. These are provisional registration, full registration, full registered and chartered, accredited, accredited and chartered (TCU, 2009). These categories lead to unanswered couple of questions concerning accreditation requirements. Have all these categories met all requirements for accreditation as specified by law? If so why are there different categories? What criteria were used to develop such categorization? What are quality implications to such categorization?

With concrete examples of established universities (to be discussed later), it may be put that TCU accredits universities without adequate evaluation of all requirements demanded by law. It is proper to argue that quality assurance starts from university establishment, and since most private universities are established out of weak quality foundations then the ultimate result is an underrated quality product. The institution responsible for quality assurance is not doing its job properly.

To the next level, TCU has set a minimum entry requirement for university applicants. However, there are three categories of applicants; direct entry applicants, equivalent and mature age entry. Direct entry applicants must possess three (3) O-level credit passes in relevant subjects and two (2) principal passes in appropriate subjects at A-level subjects. For Arts students, in addition to the above qualifications, must have grade point

<sup>18</sup> A Charter (University Charter) is defined by the Universities Act as means a constitution or a written statement of functions, organs of governance and principles of a university under section 25

<sup>19</sup> For example, the Acts of Parliament establishing UDSM, MU, and SUA

average of not less than 4.5 where A=5; B=4; C=3; D=2; E=1; S=0.5; F=0 while science students must have two (2) principal passes of any level in relevant subjects. It means that, science students who possess two E are eligible for admission. Notwithstanding, grade E implies fair performance. Science and technology programmes require applicants of excellent performance because those programmes presuppose students of high capability. This can only be determined, initially, by students' learning progress. Performance at O-level and A-level apply at this juncture. Radford asserts that students who have failed to get minimum entry qualifications by the usual routes are likely to be less academically able than those who have not although there will be some who have simply lacked the opportunity to do so. Undoubtedly, TCU sets exceptions for science students who possess one principal pass, i.e. single E to be admitted under one condition that they undergo pre-entry programme of not less than three months and pass relevant examination set by universities.

It may be argued that the rationale around setting minimum entry qualifications assumes a selection of students of certain capability, and thus, reducing the minimum entry requirement is to underrate capability which hinders required product-output. Therefore, pre-entry programme can never impart capabilities required, that were to be acquired from general education, to advance education. Private universities are very disadvantaged in terms of admitting students of excellent performance. Varghese puts that in many countries, the competition for admission to public universities is very high, and thus, those who do not get admission to public universities seek admission in private universities.

In addition, Makulilo (2011) affirms Varghese's argument after interviewing private university admission officers of sampled universities in a research conducted in 2007 and an interview with admissions office under the Central Admissions System (CAS)<sup>20</sup> at TCU in 2012. The interviews show that many of students admitted at private universities have lower qualifications as compared to those admitted in public universities. In other words, they are students who have minimum requirement (two principal passes) and others are below minimum requirement who should be subjected to pre-entry programmes. For example, SAUT has remedial programmes for Arts students who did not meet minimum requirement while UoA introduced pre-university program for those who did not meet requirements.

This is a starting point to diminishing quality of education in science despite the importance of science and technology in economic development. Equivalent applicants must hold at least five (5) O-level passes in relevant subjects, and also must hold a certificate at first

class level or diploma at a minimum of second class level all obtained from TCU or NACTE recognized and or accredited institutions.

Surprisingly, even equivalent applicants have exceptions. For those who have less than the minimum requirement must show proof that they have had at least two years of experience of work in the relevant field of study needed and must, in addition, sit and pass the institution's entry/matriculation examination. On mature age entry minimum requirement, a student applicant must have either obtained at least three (3) credits in approved subjects at O-level or attended form VI at least five (5) years before the year for which admission is sought. Also applicant must have sat and passed an institution's mature age entry examination.

Learning from the minimum entry requirements in each category, one may note that the prime objective of those criteria set is to ensure increased quantity of university enrolments. Makulilo (2011) presents that from 2003/2004 to 2007/2008 enrolments have increased tremendously, for example, UDSM has a growth rate of 13.9%, while others like MU has 37.98%, TU has 88.66%, SAUT has 78.05%, IMTU has 42.74%, and ZU has 47.56%. It may be submitted that the rapid growth rate in private universities outweighing public universities leads to two main conclusions.

First, many students who did not secure admission at public universities, where cut-off points are relatively high, got enrolled at private universities. Examples can be taken from students admitted as pre-entry/remedial students in education programmes at SAUT, TU, TEKU, ZU, UoA and so more. The assumption is, they are students of lower quality than those admitted at public universities. The expected output is equally of lower capability. Second, the growth rate of enrolment does not correspond to the existing resources and services of most universities. This will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

Therefore, by and large, undermined quality of university education is contributed by a failure of TCU to discharge its responsibilities promptly. The following section describes an assessment of private universities in Tanzania based on structural, legal and institutional approaches.

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITIES

Quality is vague. This is to say there are no universal standards on measuring quality of education. Some authors dared saying that quality standards are set based on particular culture. For example, standards of quality in Europe should be different from those in Africa since the two have incompatible cultural backgrounds. Part of the reason to the correlation between quality and culture is 'capability'. Stephenson and Weil (1992) explain that when students themselves take responsibility for appraising their educational starting points, they take the

<sup>20</sup> CAS was established by TCU in 2010/2011 for various purposes amongst quality assurance of the education

first step in controlling their educational development.

It may be submitted that students' capability to control their educational development qualifies the knowledge and skills acquired by them during course of learning. However, the capability of students is built by culture of a particular society. In other words, quality of education is value-laden. Welch (2000) puts that "certainly notions of quality are inextricable from the dominant set of values and form of culture in a society – which means that constructions of quality are socially indexed – they change over time and vary according to political and cultural context". The Tanzanian culture, in this case, has contributions to quality of education. It must be admitted that reading culture is lacking in Tanzanian culture and thus affecting quality standards. This is explained by students' dependence syndrome. Students depend solely on lectures in their learning than books. This, perhaps, is strengthened by inadequate learning materials such as books, journals, magazines, internet services, and the like. Mwiria et al. (2007) provide a Kenyan experience, and comment that "it is a common knowledge, for example, that students prefer the familiar expository method of teaching; they perceive university education as consisting primarily of the reproduction of assimilated lecture materials for the purpose of passing examinations. This is reinforced by the fact that teaching resources are so scarce". It is through this way that students loose creativity and their knowledge is limited.

One may argue thus with constrained resources quality standards are diminished greatly. Private universities in Tanzania concretize this argument. They are institutions of higher education owned by individuals or non-governmental organizations. Most of them are currently owned by religious organizations and/or churches. For example, SAUT and its constituent colleges are owned by Catholic Church, SJUT and its Centre are owned by Anglican Church of Tanzania, TU and its constituent colleges are owned by Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, TEKU and its expected Centres are owned by Moravian Church in Tanzania (MCT), UoA is owned by Tanzania Union Mission of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, MUM is founded by Muslim Development Foundation (MDF), and ZU is founded by a religious foundation known as Daar-ul-imaan. However, their services are no more than business. As they form a big number of private providers they are arguably, the immediate government partners in the provision of university education.

### Adequate resources

The adequacy of resources is one base of assessing quality of private universities' education. The reference is made to sufficient physical buildings for library, lecture rooms, students' hostels, and cafeteria. The buildings of most universities in Tanzania have been upgraded from other activities. These buildings were constructed to

serve some other purposes such as secondary school, colleges and religious activities. And thus, they are limited in terms of space and activities performed or services offered. For example, MUM inherited government buildings that were used by TANESCO<sup>22</sup>; TUDARCO occupies some of the buildings of the African Evangelistic Enterprises (AEE) which are only a stone throw away from the church<sup>23</sup>; SJUT refurbished buildings of the former Mazengo Technical Secondary School to a university library<sup>24</sup>; UoA was previously a religious Adventist college; SMMCO is developed from Masoka Management Training Institute (MMTI) and Mwika Lutheran Bible College (LBC)<sup>25</sup>; TEKU is formerly Moravian Theological College (MOTHECO) with a view to train pastors in Chunya. SAUT-Bukoba was formerly Teachers Training College, to mention a few. The implication of this is multifaceted.

First, it affects students living and learning conditions. In terms of accommodation, students are obliged to rent rooms outside university campuses. This is due to the fact that most universities do not have enough student hostels to all admitted students. For instance, SEKUCO is able to serve accommodation and cafeteria services for only 200 students. However, some universities such as TUDARCO do not have hostels at all. The university opts for recommending some landlords. It is argued that landlords usually charges higher as compared to university hostels. For example, in Dar es Salaam, landlords charge, depending on location and services offered, up to 100,000 Tsh. per month (equivalent to 64USD) while at university hostels, a student pays up to 600Tsh. per day (about 18,000Tsh. per month) equivalent to 11USD. In Mwanza, private hostels near SAUT charges as follow. Africa One charges 1mil. equivalent to 645USD per year, Kashekulo charges 700,000Tsh. equivalent to 451USD for some rooms and others 1mil. per year, Masha Hotel charges from 800,000Tsh. equivalent to 516USD per year, and White House charges 700,000Tsh. per year<sup>26</sup>.

Notwithstanding, university hostels are in most cases subsidized and thus affordable by most students of lower income. It is submitted that students with low income live miserably sometimes eat once a day, consequently, lower concentration in learning hence deteriorated quality of the education. Moreover, learning environment at some rented rooms outside the university is pathetic and not suitable for learning.

Second, a library service is another point of departure. Most universities do not have enough books leaving

<sup>22</sup> TANESCO stands for Tanzania National Electric and Supply Company. The buildings previously design for the Institute of TANESCO were handled to Muslims by the government for the purpose of establishing a university.

<sup>23</sup> Source: [www.tumainidsm.ac.tz](http://www.tumainidsm.ac.tz) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>24</sup> Source: SJUT Prospectus, 2010-2011

<sup>25</sup> Source: [www.smmuco.ac.tz](http://www.smmuco.ac.tz) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>26</sup> Source: Landlords' accommodation fee structure

behind the fact that e-books, journals, other e-sources are almost redundant in Tanzania due to inefficient power supply and frequent internet interruptions. It is adverse in regions like Tabora, Songea, Bukoba, Tanga, Mtwara, Dodoma, and Morogoro where most private universities are established.

Third, the increase in students' enrolments does not correspond to existing buildings; as a result some universities apply double intake and/or session study. For example, TUDARCO applies both double intake and session study. There is morning session from 8:00 a.m to 4:30 p.m (about 9hrs) and evening session from 5:00 p.m to 10:00 p.m (about 6hrs). That means there are students who are admitted for the morning session and others evening session. Since both morning and evening session programmes accommodate full-time programmes, it is not known how evening session students will compensate about three (3) hours that seem less of those in the morning session. Yet, all students in both sessions graduate at the same time. For example, Certificate Course in Accountancy and Business Administration (CABA) is a one year full-time programme offered in two sessions (morning and evening)<sup>28</sup>.

### Human resources

Adequate but qualified human resource is the greatest challenge facing almost all universities in Tanzania. Most of academic staff and non-academic staff are of lower profile holding a certificate, diploma, advanced diploma, bachelor and a master degree. For example, out of about 139 academic staff at SAUT 22 are seniors and 117 juniors (SAUT Prospectus, 2011). It is worth noting that the university has adequate staff, yet, of lower profile. This is hindrance to attainment of quality products. UoA has a total of 42 academic staff where only one (1) staff is senior. It may be submitted that junior staff who are on training cannot deliver efficiently and effectively. HKMU is also experiencing shortages of human resources. The university has opted to a use of part time lecturers.

The department of surgery has three (3) part time lecturers; department of internal medicine has one (1) senior lecturer and one (1) part time assistant lecturer; department of radiology has one (1) part time lecturer; department of community medicine has one (1) part time lecturer; department of pathology has four (4) staffs who are all part time lecturers; department of development studies has one (1) staff who is a part time lecturer; department of biochemistry and molecular biology has one (1) professor, one (1) lecturer, one (1) visiting professor, and one (1) tutorial assistant; department of anatomy has one (1) professor, two (2) assistant lecturers, and two (2) part time

lecturers<sup>31</sup>; to mention a few. It is not surprising to see a university employs part time lecturer at times of need but it becomes anomaly when the university depends solely on part time lecturers. If the total number of part time lecturers, present, in a department or faculty exceeds full employed lecturers, it

is one sign of diminishing quality of education. Two points can be enunciated. First, part time lecturers are in most cases in possession of full employment somewhere else. It is almost impossible to effectively and efficiently serve the two employers (part time and full time) equally since human beings have limitations of time and capability. Second, one of the conditions to establish a university, as enumerated by the Universities Act, is that there must be adequate and qualified staffs with full time employment in each degree programme. It is unlawful to establish university depending on part time lecturers as much as quality of education is deteriorated.

SJUT has about fifty-two (52) academic staff for undergraduate courses where two (2) are professors, two (2) part time lecturers, the rest are juniors. However, the post for laboratory technician in chemistry department is vacant (SJUT Prospectus, 2011). MUM has about thirty-one (31) academic staff where two (2) are professors, one (1) lecturer, seventeen (17) assistant lecturers and eleven (11) tutorial assistants. It is interesting to note that there are some departments with only tutorial assistants. For instance languages and linguistics department has four units, namely, English where there is only one staff (tutorial assistant), Kiswahili unit with only two staffs (tutorial assistants), Linguistics unit with two assistant lecturers and Arabic unit with one assistant and one lecturer. Geography department has one (1) assistant lecturer and three (3) tutorial assistants.

One may argue that tutorial assistants and assistant lecturers are junior and must be mentored by seniors. With much emphasis, tutorial assistants have a very limited knowledge and their duty is to administer seminars or tutorials. Surprisingly, they are left alone in a department or unit to administer courses. This is more of limiting quality of education. It is even worse at TEKU where about twenty-eight (28)<sup>32</sup> tutorial assistants have been employed as part time in deferent departments.

### Self-Assessment

Universities have three core functions to perform. Frimpong (2004) states that, "universities, by tradition, fulfill three important goals: teaching, research and service." He further explains that "in practical terms, these can be expanded within African context, as seen by Saint (1992: xiii), to cover five broad areas such as to transform themselves into legitimate national institutions

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Source: [www.tumainidsm.academic/2nd\\_caba\\_intake\\_application.php](http://www.tumainidsm.academic/2nd_caba_intake_application.php) last visited 15th February 2012

<sup>31</sup> Source: [www.hkmu.ac.tz/index.medicine/category/profile](http://www.hkmu.ac.tz/index.medicine/category/profile) of departments last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>32</sup> Source: [www.teku.ac.tz/staffs.htm](http://www.teku.ac.tz/staffs.htm) last visited 15th February 2012

of higher learning, to produce human resources necessary to manage newly independent countries, to generate developmentally relevant research, to provide community service, and to constitute a diverse and representative student body". However, service as a university function is currently known as consultancy. Notwithstanding, researches and publications are intertwined. Publications are a result of researches conducted on one hand, publications leads to further researches on the other hand. Researches and publications provide, therefore, the most critical role of universities in the society despite the fact that it is this role which distinguish a university from other forms of tertiary education.

Moreover, quality teaching impacts positively to research. Fabrice (2010) argues that "teachers become more aware of the aim pursued by teaching beyond their own knowledge area, they understand their role as individuals and as components of collective mission, and can better relate their own expectations to the programme or institutions expectations in terms of learning outcomes". It may be submitted that in the presence of lower profile academic staffs and part time lecturers or part time tutorial staff there is a very narrow chance for a university to conduct researches and publications apart from consultancy. Nevertheless, every university has a duty bound to a fully discharge of the three functions: to research and publish; and do consultancy and teaching. With due respect, most times, researches and publications, and/or consultancy activities have been conducted mainly by public institutions.

In this case, UDSM, SUA, MU, MUHAS, OUT and ARU provide concrete examples. Part of the reason is that these universities have a large number of lecturers/research fellows and senior lecturers/research fellows. Therefore, they are capable of conducting quality researches that in turn have positive impact to development projects. For example, at the University of Dar es Salaam there are University of Dar es Salaam Entrepreneurship Centre (UDEEC), University Computing Centre (UCC), Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), Institute of Kiswahili, Department of Foreign Languages, and Research for Democracy and Elections in Tanzania (REDET) which provide researches and consultancies to individuals, organizations (international and national), and the government.

The output of researches amounted to 353 publications (more than 80% in the international journals) and 22 books in 2006/7.<sup>33</sup> It is not surprising to see private universities with several years of operation having a few or no researches and/or consultancies conducted. Such examples are TU, SAUT, ZU, MU, SJUT, and many more which have been recent established universities. It is interesting to note that most of these universities'

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Source:

[www.sarua.org/q?uni\\_university%20of%20Dar%20es%20Salaam](http://www.sarua.org/q?uni_university%20of%20Dar%20es%20Salaam)  
last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

websites contain no information about researches and consultancy besides the listing of researches and consultancy as a service. It is even further indicated that the site is under construction. It may be put that it is almost impossible for a private university which does not conduct researches and publications to maintain quality standards of university education.

On teaching, probably, this is the most problematic. With inadequate human resources, private universities have opted to a massive use of tutorial assistants and assistant lecturers on full time basis or part time. It must be noted that tutorial assistants are not allowed to teach as they are on trainings. They can only be utilized to conduct seminars and/or tutorials. It is very strange to see a holder of bachelor degree teaches undergraduate classes or a master degree holder teaches graduate classes (master courses). One may wonder how can this practice be embraced and still maintain quality education. It is not a question to debate whether quality is undermined or not in this case. As a matter of fact, some students themselves have started doubting the ability of their course instructors. It is currently reported on HabariLeo Newspaper of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011 that students from Eckernforde Tanga University (ETU)<sup>35</sup> are questioning the ability of their lecturers and thus demanding TCU and the Ministry for Education and Vocational Training to form a commission that have to investigate qualifications of some lecturers. They even wondered how TCU could accredit such university in absence of qualified lecturers<sup>36</sup>. It may be argued that without qualified lecturers and adequate resources teaching is under great risk and the product output is of low quality.

Conclusively, Lim argues that "if the quality of teaching is poor, the rate of investment in education and the impact of the socially optimal total and mixture of educational spending on economic growth will be lower". To accredit many universities and colleges that explicate inadequate human resources, particularly academic staffs, in order to stimulate economic growth is decisive and fallacy.

## QUALITY UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: A WAY-WARDNESS?

Quality management in education is a very challenging endeavor. While university management shots blames to students as being lazy, students, on the other hand, claim that inadequate infrastructural facilities present in most

<sup>35</sup> Eckernforde Tanga University is a new private university registered by TCU with Certificate of Provisional Registration (CPR) no. 034 of 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2010. Source: [www.eckernfordetangauniversity.ac.tz/admission.html](http://www.eckernfordetangauniversity.ac.tz/admission.html) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>36</sup> Source: [www.habarileo.co.tz/kitaifa/?n=24231](http://www.habarileo.co.tz/kitaifa/?n=24231) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

universities is a stumbling block to their success in fulfilling their careers. With an acknowledgement of the two contributions, this article argues that it is the whole political system which encrypts education system and thus destabilizes quality. Supportively, Lim asserts that, "governments in the developing countries tend to prefer capital to recurrent because of the greater ease in scoring short-run political points. In the first instance, the public is far more impressed with, for example, the number of new schools built than the quality of teaching." The foundations for quality university students are quality primary and quality secondary students. Universities enroll students from secondary schools. The preparation of secondary school students has a greater impact to university quality output. This is a concern of education policy formulation. It is a challenge in most developing countries including Tanzania.

Politicians formulate policies that reflect the chances of being reelected for the next term. It does not matter how destructive, in terms of outcome, policies could be. For example, the implementation of Primary Education Development Program (PEDEP) and Secondary Education Development Program (SEDEP) in 2001 to 2004 and 2004 to 2007 respectively has a disastrous impact to quality of students who are potential university inputs.

Argumentatively, the two programs aimed at increasing primary school and secondary school enrolments and instilling equity in access. In support of this, World Bank (2010) points the objectives of the programs out. PEDEP, among the rest, aimed at expanding school access while SEDEP aimed at improving learning outcomes of students especially girls at lower secondary level. The outcomes of these were increase in enrolment hence increased numbers of school leavers. The implication of this is an increased supply of university inputs (students). For example, World Bank reports that PEDEP led to enrolment expansion from 4.9mil in 2001 to 7mil in 2004 while SEDEP led to moderately unsatisfactory in terms of passing examination rate. The enrolment increased from 432,600 in 2004 to 1,400,000 in 2009 with passing examination rate declining from 92% to 72%. One of the reasons to this detrimental performance is shortages of qualified teachers.

Interestingly, it has been noted that those students who did not pass very well and could not be able to join universities are allowed to re-sit their final exams as many times as they can until they get the minimum qualification to join universities. It is of less important to know how the quality of the preparations could be. The approach has led to mushrooming of education centres which offer short time preparations such as one to six months. It may be argued that the quality of students expected to join universities is under threat. In responding to shortages of qualified teachers, the government introduces a number of strategies. First is, fast tracking teacher training programs. Unlike the normal

teacher training program that lasts for two (2) years, fast tracking training programs are reduced to one year and six months for grade A and diploma respectively. The aim is to increase as many teachers as possible in a short time. No one can deny the fact that at this juncture quality has never been compromised. The misty revolving fast tracking teachers (commonly known as Voda Fasta) is that the programs utilize students who do not perform the best in their secondary education final examinations. Usually, third class (DIV. III) is preferred to join diploma in education and fourth class (DIV. IV) to join grade A teacher training.

Such achievements in examinations are considered as poor because it was, before recent policy adjustments, under rare cases (especially for female) that a student with such a performance could be admitted at universities. They are generally students who have lost hope and careers. Commenting on the same, Prof. Omari (2012) when responding to an interview by Mwananchi Newspaper, says "the greater percentage of present teachers have low ability in teaching due to a poor performance obtained in their final exams and thus they are not able to impart creative knowledge to students. He narrates further that there is a very big difference between colonial education and the current. Students enrolled in education trainings, during colonial education, were those who performed the best while today admitted students are those who perform poorly."<sup>37</sup> Conclusively, fast tracking teachers training programs have been able to increase teachers of poor quality.

The second strategy is for the government to encourage establishment of university colleges that focuses on education courses. More importantly, education courses have been declared courses of priority among others, and thus, students enrolled in education programmes have easy access to government loans from the Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB). This attracted both students and university owners to study and establish education courses respectively.

Nevertheless, the more attracted students are those who do not perform very well in their advanced secondary school final exams where they have very low chances to be enrolled in programmes like Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Engineering, Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Science in Medicine, to mention a few, which admit students of relatively higher performance such as first class (DIV.I) (especially in public universities). Moreover, sadly expressing, students who could not fulfill the minimum requirement to enroll at universities are allowed to do so after attending and passing exams of some programmes commonly known as pre-university courses as explained above.

<sup>37</sup> Prof. Omari Issa is a retired senior lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam, School of Education. Source: [www.mwananchi.co.tz/makala/-/19632-prof-omari-tuige-mfumo-wa-kikoloni-kunusuru-sekta-ya-elimu](http://www.mwananchi.co.tz/makala/-/19632-prof-omari-tuige-mfumo-wa-kikoloni-kunusuru-sekta-ya-elimu) last visited 15th February 2012

Most of private universities have grasped this opportunity. SAUT, ZU, UoA, and SJUT provide us with relevant examples.

Similarly, almost all private universities have introduced education degree programmes and/or university colleges with a focus on education programmes. For example, ZU, MWECE<sup>38</sup>, UCEZ, ETU, TEKU, TUDARCO, SMMUCO, AMUCTA<sup>39</sup>, STEMMUCO<sup>40</sup>, JUCO<sup>41</sup>, SAUT – Bukoba Centre, and SAUT – Songea Centre. There is no doubt that there has been a rapid increase of private universities and/or private university colleges since 2000s to-date. For example, SAUT alone has established about five (5) university colleges and two (2) university centers (SAUT Prospectus, 2011 to 2012), Tumaini university has established about two (2) colleges<sup>42</sup>.

SJUT has one (1) centre in Dar es Salaam, namely, Saint Mark's Teaching Centre<sup>43</sup>, Aga Khan University (AKU), MUM, TEKU, UoA, ETU, UCEZ, MUM, and MMU. However, TEKU expects to establish two (2) centers in Dar es Salaam and Tabora year 2011/2012<sup>44</sup> while SAUT intends to establish seven (7) colleges at Dar es Salaam, Mbeya, Zanzibar, Singida and Biharamulo in 2013-2015.<sup>45</sup> Generally speaking, the establishment of private universities has increased from about six (6) universities and university colleges in 1992-2000 to about twenty-eight (28) universities and university colleges to-date. Questions remain, has such proliferation of universities had a positive impact to Tanzanian development? What about the labour market? Are graduates from these universities utilizable? What matters most – quantity or quality? Answers to these questions are straight forward. Tanzania is still a very poor country where many people including graduates live miserably. It is surprising enough to find that while Tanzania graduates are crying for jobs graduates from neighboring countries (Kenya and Uganda) are enjoying employment opportunities in

Tanzania. There are lot of Kenyans and Ugandans working in Tanzanian firms and universities that would have been occupied by Tanzanians. For example, universities like SAUT, MWECE, and SMMCO have employed a greater number of Kenyans. The argument I am making here is, quantity has surpassed quality, and thus, no development can be achieved out of mere quantity.

Quality assurance is another area of contestation. The term refers to all the policies and processes directed to ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of quality (Lim, 2001). The concept was firstly introduced in developed countries after the Second World War (WII). It was a response to radical changes in higher education experienced by many countries in Europe. Frazer (1992) elaborates that “such changes are extending educational opportunity and providing the knowledge and skills required by society. But the extent of changes in scale, coverage, personnel and cost has inevitably led to concern and debate about ways of ensuring the quality as well as the quantity of graduates”. One may argue that quality assurance is very complicated, and thus, quantity should not overweigh quality, since changes in scale and coverage have impact on quantity.

Therefore, this leads to a demand for public accountability including establishment of agencies specifically concerned with quality assurance in higher education, some of which have the powers to accredit institutions and programmes (Frazer, 1992).

The challenge that exists is how effective those agencies could be in terms of discharging assigned functions. Quality assurance was introduced in developing countries in 1990s. It was after the implementation of SAPs. SAPs necessitated the introduction of private universities and thus a demand for quality assurance. Materu (2007) describes the purposes of introducing quality assurance in Africa. He says, “it was after the recognition of the powerful role of tertiary for growth and a natural response to public perception that education quality is being compromised in the effort to expand enrollment in recent years; growing complains by employers that graduates are poorly prepared for the work place; and an increasing competition in the higher education market place as numerous private and transnational providers enter the scene”.

From the above justifications to the introduction of quality assurance, one may conclude that quality assurance has to overcome emerging challenges facing higher education that might have disastrous effect, when uncontrolled, to the role of a university in particular. Since the inception of quality assurance in Tanzania there have been two agencies established by law to ensure the maintenance of quality. These are Higher education Accreditation Council (HEAC) in 1995 and TCU in 2005. HEAC was replaced by TCU after enactment of the Universities Act. The establishment of TCU was/is, generally, a primary reason to a discharging of various functions on issues of higher education,

<sup>38</sup> MWECE is a constituent College of SAUT. Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012

<sup>39</sup> AMNUCTA is a constituent college of SAUT established in 2010 with programmes such as Bachelor of Arts in Education (BAED) and Bachelor of Arts in Sociology (BASO) at present. The Source: [www.amnucta.ac.tz](http://www.amnucta.ac.tz) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>40</sup> MTUCO is a constituent college of SAUT established in 2009. Source: [www.saut.ac.tz](http://www.saut.ac.tz) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>41</sup> JUCO is a constituent college of SAUT established in 2010 with two programmes at present, namely, BAED and BASO. BAED is conceived from that critical shortage and need for teachers. Source: [www.morogoro.sds.org/Edmain.html](http://www.morogoro.sds.org/Edmain.html) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>42</sup> These are SEKUCO and SMMCO

<sup>43</sup> St. Mark's Teaching Centre is located at Buguruni Malapa Dar es Salaam in the Anglican Church. It was developed from a theological college. Source: [www.sjut.ac.tz/Stmarks.php](http://www.sjut.ac.tz/Stmarks.php) last visited 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012

<sup>44</sup> Source: [www.teku.ac.tz/messagevc.htm](http://www.teku.ac.tz/messagevc.htm) last visited February 2012

<sup>45</sup> Source: SAUT Prospectus 2011-2012

revolving around quality, as conferred by the Universities Act. Therefore, TCU has already accredited more than twenty (20) private universities and colleges in a very short time (about 6 years). One may question the speed to such accreditation. It is plausible to state that it has largely been contributed by a political decision made by the government in 2008 - *to abolish an award to advanced diploma*. Such abolition led to a prompt solution of upgrading of most colleges and institutes which offered advanced diplomas previously, to universities. This is to a large extent a positive contribution to the emanating quality problems.

Quality assurance involves a number of strategies. Starting from accreditation of universities; quality audit system, learning organization, management plans; to variations for its implementation. This article limits itself to a detailed discussion on quality assurance by TCU and whether it has been successfully handled or not because the above thorough discussion on inadequate resources and weak implementation of the Universities Act by TCU is enough to its justification. However, the discussion needs an article of its own due to importance and nature of the issue. The strategies imposed by TCU such as curriculum review after every specified time, academic audit, moderations of exams, a system of external examiners and students' evaluations are decisive and work with deprecations.

Vehemently, Fabrice (2010) puts it that, "the influence of quality assurance on quality teaching remains controversial: it is deemed ineffective by its detractors in academia and among educational researchers. However, institutions recognize the role of agencies as indicators of a reflection process that could culminate in the design of instruments or a strategy enhancing quality teaching. When the evaluation process generates internal discussions on teaching, it is as essential to the awareness of quality teaching as agency recommendations".

## CONCLUSION

The quality of university education in Tanzania is under a thunderous shake. Most private universities have inadequate human resources, physical resources, fiscal resources, and learning facilities. These have diminished quality as a result graduates are unable to deliver at work places. Consequently, unemployment rates continue to increase at unprecedented heights. However, the government spends a lot of money preparing unutilized human resources. It is wastage of resources of its kind. The proliferation of universities and colleges, particularly, privately owned, without a proper evaluation of their resources is just one step of increasing graduates by names and not their performance. This is an opening to importing human resources. In addition, such increase in numbers of universities does not correlate with increasing

researches so as to solve a number of problems facing developing countries like Tanzania, besides, qualified labour force and researches are the foundation of development. This article recommends a fast tracking review of education policies and laws. Moreover, institutions responsible for quality assurance must be held accountable for a better discharging of their core functions.

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